

A.C.L.U. Demands End To Agnew Inquiry Leaks

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 15 — The American Civil Liberties Union has called upon Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson to stop leaks of information to the press concerning the investigation of Vice President Agnew.

The plea came in a letter from Charles W. Morgan Jr., director of the union's national office.

"A review of the newspaper articles which have appeared in the past week suggests that information going well beyond" the guidelines of the union "has in fact appeared in the press despite the fact that the investigation has not progressed to the grand jury stage," Mr. Morgan wrote.

"The release of this information raises serious questions about the due process being accorded the Vice President and the others whose names have been mentioned," he continued.

Last week, only hours before The Wall Street Journal published an article alleging that the Federal prosecutor in Baltimore had informed the Vice President he was the subject of a criminal investigation, Mr. Agnew issued a brief statement announcing the investigation and proclaiming his innocence.

A spokesman for the Justice Department, Horace Webb, said in response to an inquiry today that "to the best of our knowledge, none of the leaks of information have come from the department or the office of United States Attorney George Beall."

Mr. Webb added that the Attorney General had already

issued orders reiterating the department's policy of making no comment about the investigation.

Mr. Morgan said that it was impossible for the union to determine the source of the leaks about Mr. Agnew.

"It does seem, however, that some of the information which has appeared in the newspapers could only have come, directly or indirectly, from law enforcement officials," he said.

He said that because of the First Amendment guarantee of a free press, the burden of protecting those under investigation cannot be placed on the press. "The responsibility must be yours: to stop such leak before they occur," he said.